

**Executive Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes**

5/2/11

Community Correctional Facility, Unity

EFC Members Present: Reps. Philip "Joe" Osgood, Spec Bowers, John Cloutier

EFC Members Absent: Reps. Thomas Laware (entered meeting at 8:47 am), Charlene Lovett

County Elected Officials and Employees Present: County Adm. Greg Chanis

Public Present: Anne Nilsen of Sunapee, Former Rep. Suzanne Gottling

Press Present: Eagle Times Archie Mountain

The Chair, Rep. Osgood opened meeting at 8:42 am.

Mr. Chanis started with an overall review of the county's finances, starting with revenue.

Re. Laware entered meeting at 8:47 am.

Among other points, Mr. Chanis reviewed major budget factors in the Fiscal Year 2012 County Budget as recognized by the commissioners in drawing up their proposed county budget (see attached 4/5/11 Sheet).

Mr. Chanis said that adding about \$130,000 in spending to this year's county budget results in about 1% increase in county property taxes.

Mr. Chanis discussed in some detail with EFC members present one of the FY (Fiscal Year) 2012 Budget Factors which is an estimated \$160,000 increase in human services cost – a cost determined in part by state law thus currently at \$100 million cost cap, of which Sullivan County is responsible for approximately 5%.

Said the proposed 2% wage increase for all county employees as listed in the Budget Factors sheet was reduced by the commissioners to a 1% wage increase.

Next, Mr. Chanis reviewed Budget Adjustments Sheet of 4/19/11 (See Attachment) which listed adjustments made by commissioners made to FY 2012 Budget as first proposed by him and other department heads.

Then Mr. Chanis reviewed proposed use of the Unreserved Fund Balance which is now approximately \$2.677 million. He added that mainly because of this balance, the county will probably not have to borrow money in anticipation of taxes until at least August or September 2011 at the earliest.

Mr. Chanis reviewed various budget snapshots including how tax revenue is spent on various county functions. The most is spent on human services, followed by the Community Corrections Center, and then taxpayer utilization of Sullivan County Health Care. These amounts are for the FY 2011 Budget.

Mr. Chanis briefly discussed spending on various county capital projects, including future capital spending needs. He said the biggest need is to increase the County Complex's water supply as well as renovations to the Sanders Bldg. at the County Complex.

Mr. Chanis said the average increase in County property taxes over the last 20 years has been about 3.5%

Mr. Mountain left at around 10:20 am when EFC took a short break, returning at about 10:35 am.

Mr. Chanis then went back to reviewing revenue section of the budget book.

Under review on p. R3, Mr. Chanis said of the approximate \$203,819 in state court lease payments from the State of NH for the two courts in Newport, the Town of Newport will be given between \$35,000-40,000 because they own part of the building, along with the county where two courts are located.

Rep. Cloutier asked about proposed Registry of Deeds fees on p. R5 which the commissioners have recommended at \$350,000 for FY 2012. Mr. Chanis said \$350,000 figure was recommended by the Registrar of Deeds.

Mr. Chanis then started to review the expense side of the budget. Among other subjects, he described elected officials salaries and benefits, and explained earned time for non-union employees, and how they are allowed to sell back their earned time for extra pay to the county once a year. He added that union employees voluntarily gave up earned time a few years ago in exchange for a defined vacation benefit.

Mr. Chanis reviewed various line items in the Commissioner's Office section of the proposed budget. They included a brief discussion on money transfers between or within departments and whether the commissioners have to get approval from the EFC on delegation. From discussions which included input from former Rep. Gottling and Rep. Cloutier, it was learned what present money transfer policy is according to Mr. Chanis' reading of the June 2010 County Convention minutes.

At Rep. Bowers' request Mr. Chanis reviewed the Emergency Reserve Fund proposal on p.15 and the overexpenditure on the FY 2011 Fund caused by last year's oil tank spill at the County Complex.

Mrs. Nilsen and former Rep. Gottling left meeting around 12:00 pm and as EFC broke for lunch. EFC returned at about 12:45 pm.

Mr. Chanis resumed meeting by reviewing county's fund balance history between Fiscal Years 2004-2010.

Then he reviewed Sullivan County Health Care's proposed capital expenditure items for FY 2012 on p. 48 of the budget book. Continuing he discussed and answered questions from EFC on capital expenditures for Community Correctional Facility and Unity's County Complex in general on pp. 49-50.

Mr. Chanis then had a general discussion with EFC on various topics including whether to convert the underutilized Sanders Bldg. into an arrested living facility, as well as various changes to employees' health insurance plans.

EFC members then discussed proposed county grants to local non-profit organizations and whether as well as how much such grants should be funded.

Mr. Chanis agreed to have Correctional Facility Supt. Ross Cunningham and Sullivan County Health Care Adm. Ted Purdy meet with the EFC at the next meeting on May 9 at 8:30 am in Newport.

EFC members present agreed in principle to try to keep the FY 2012 Budget tax increase to about the 20-year average of a 3.5%.

Rep. Bowers moved, Rep. Laware seconded a motion, to adjourn, and motion was approved unanimously by voice vote at 3:14 pm.



Rep. John R. Cloutier
Acting Clerk

Date approved: 5-23-11